

INFORMATION REPORT INFORMATION REPORT

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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| COUNTRY | West Germany | REPORT NO. | CS-311/12918-67 |
| SUBJECT | SPD Views on Succession to Presidency and Vice Presidency of the BND | DATE DISTR. | 20 December 1967 |
| | | NO. PAGES | 1 |
| | | REFERENCES | <i>MAB</i> |

DATE OF INFO. 5 December 1967

PLACE & DATE ACQ. Germany, Bonn
(5 December 1967)

FIELD REPORT NO.

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SOURCE: Qualified American observer from State Secretary Horst Ehmke of the West German Ministry of Justice.

1. On 5 December State Secretary Horst Ehmke stated that the Social Democratic Party (SPD) had decided to support the candidacy of Lieutenant General Gerhard Wessel as the successor to General Reinhard Gehlen as President of the West German Federal Intelligence Service (BND). Ehmke indicated that the Christian Democratic Union and Christian Socialist Union (CDU/CSU) had also suggested Ambassador Swidbert Schnippenkoetter for this position but the SPD found his candidacy unacceptable.

2. As a quid pro quo for supporting General Wessel, the SPD wants to have the right to nominate the Vice-President of the BND. The candidates under current consideration by the SPD are Dr. Guenther Nollau, Vice President of the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution (BfV), and Dr. Guenther Redding, President of the State Office for the Protection of the Constitution in Hamburg. According to Ehmke, Nollau is in a stronger position since he has the support of Deputy SPD party chief Herbert Wehner while there is some opposition within the SPD to Redding. Ehmke predicted that the SPD would make their nomination for the BND Vice Presidency rather soon.

Headquarters Comment: For General Wessel's remarks about his candidacy and Chancellor Kiesinger's comments to him, see CS-311/12308-67.

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